

**BY ORDER OF THE COMMANDER
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING
COMMAND**



AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 90-401

**AETC
Supplement 1**

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Command Policy

AIR FORCE RELATIONS WITH CONGRESS

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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AFI 90-401, 1 July 1998, is supplemented as follows:

2.1. The HQ AETC Command Action Group (AETC/CCX) is the designated point of contact (POC) for visits to AETC units by members of Congress or their staffs.

2.1.1. (Added) AETC/CCX notifies and coordinates with SAF/LL or SAF/FML when any AETC wing or unit receives notice directly from a member of Congress (or congressional staff member) of a planned visit to an AETC installation or activity.

2.1.2. (Added) Field commanders will ensure AETC/CCX is notified immediately after local receipt of notice directly from a member of Congress (or congressional staff member) of a planned visit to an AETC installation or activity. Provide AETC/CCX with a copy of the notice, the proposed itineraries, and an outline of any potential issues. AETC/CCX will notify AETC/CC, CV, DS, PA, and CCP of the planned visit.

4.1. AETC/CCX is the central POC for all legislative issues affecting the command, with the exception of those outlined in this supplement as within the purview of the HQ AETC/IG. AETC/CCX responsibilities include:

4.1.1. Developing, coordinating, and supervising the AETC Legislative Program.

4.1.2. Ensuring the accuracy and consistency of information intended for Congress.

4.1.3. Evaluating, reporting, and disseminating pertinent legislative information to the command.

4.1.4. Preparing command witnesses for congressional hearings.

4.1.5. Reviewing transcripts, excerpts from congressional hearing testimony, and actual hearing questions taken for the record.

4.1.6. Coordinating congressional travel within the command.

4.2.2. Through public affairs (PA) channels, field units obtain AETC/CV concurrence on any proposal to invite a member of Congress (or congressional staff members) to visit the installation. Send invitations and undated, signed cover memoranda to HQ AETC/PAC for AETC/CV concurrence and dispatch by HQ AETC. Do not fold these memoranda. Contact HQ AETC/PAC for necessary guidance when insufficient lead time prevents the 60-day notice requirement.

4.3.1. (*HQ AETC only*) The Director of Staff (DS) is the designated POC for resolving issues concerning preparation of replies to congressional inquiries and clarifying guidance on processing congressional inquiries that appear sensitive or controversial. AETC/CV and the HQ AETC Inspector General (HQ AETC/IG) have a continuing interest in AETC replies to congressional inquiries and or complaints, including those submitted to Air Staff agencies. Send an informational copy of every reply to AETC/CV and HQ AETC/IG.

4.3.1.1. (Added) HQ AETC replies to congressional inquiries must be cleared through AETC/CC in the following two instances:

4.3.1.1.1. When a HQ AETC staff activity replies *directly* to a member of Congress (or congressional staff member).

4.3.1.1.2. When the inquiry concerns *sensitive or controversial matters* (such as classified information; and major changes in the status of Air Force units, installations, large contracts, or industrial facilities that may have a marked impact on states and congressional districts). If there is a question as to whether an inquiry concerns sensitive or controversial matters, consult HQ AETC/DS for guidance.

4.3.2. (*HQ AETC only*) HQ AETC/IGQ will:

4.3.2.1. Process congressional and high-level inquiries tasked by SAF/IGQ to HQ AETC and those referred by HQ AETC/DS into IG channels.

4.3.2.2. Task subordinate units to conduct IG investigations, as necessary, based on congressional and high-level inquiries. Ensure appropriate documentation in the Automated Complaints Tracking System (ACTS II), or preparation of an AF Form 102, **Inspector General Personal and Fraud, Waste and Abuse Complaint Registration**, when an IG investigation is initiated based on a congressional or other high-level inquiry.

4.3.3.1. (Added) (*HQ AETC only*) HQ AETC staff agencies will:

3.3.1.1. Follow the guidance in **Table 1. (Added)**, this supplement, when processing direct congressional inquiries or requests from Air Force agencies for information (in response to congressional inquiries).

4.3.3.1.2. Determine if information requested by a member of Congress may be released by HQ AETC or SAF/LLI; promptly contact HQ AETC/DS or SAF/LLI when guidance is needed. Acknowledge receipt of inquiries received directly from a member of Congress (or congressional staff member) within 24 hours. Send an informational copy of the letter of acknowledgment (LOA) and the inquiry to SAF/LLI, AETC/CV, and HQ AETC/IG. State in the LOA whether a complete answer will be provided from HQ AETC or SAF/LLI. When SAF/LLI will issue the complete response, promptly provide appropriate AETC input to meet the SAF/LLI suspense.

4.3.3.1.3. Include the following statement verbatim in the LOA when HQ AETC provides the complete answer: "*We will forward the complete answer, or an interim response, within 20 days.*" Work congressional and other high-level inquiries expeditiously, and limit interim responses (at the 20-day point) to situations involving commander-directed, IG, or Military Equal Opportunity (MEO) investigations.

4.3.3.1.4. Use written requests when soliciting input from wing level or referring inquiries to wing level for action. Ensure the wing or unit IG is an informational addressee for every referral or written request for input.

4.3.3.2. (Added) Field commanders follow the guidance in **Table 1. (Added)**, this supplement, when processing direct congressional inquiries or requests from Air Force agencies for a response to congressional inquiries. Establish a primary POC for congressional and high-level inquiries (such as the full-time IG or officer assigned additional duty as the IG). The primary POC ensures congressional and other high-level inquiries are sent to appropriate local agencies for action, with factual replies promptly and properly processed to the wing or unit commander for release approval. The POC will:

4.3.3.2.1. Determine if information requested by a member of Congress may be released locally or by HQ AETC or SAF/LLI. Promptly contact the appropriate HQ AETC staff office of primary responsibility (OPR) or SAF/LLI action officer when guidance is needed. Acknowledge receipt within 24 hours of inquiries received directly from a member of Congress (or congressional staff member), with an informational copy of the inquiry and the LOA sent to SAF/LLI, AETC/CV, and HQ AETC/IG. State in the LOA whether a complete answer will be provided from the local level, HQ AETC, or SAF/LLI. When the complete answer will be provided from the local level, the LOA will include the following statement verbatim: *"We will forward the complete answer, or an interim response, within 20 days."* Send an informational copy of every reply to a direct congressional inquiry to SAF/LLI, AETC/CV, and HQ AETC/IG (NOTE: Send informational copies to AU/CV, 2 AF/CV, or 19 AF/CV, as necessary). When the LOA states HQ AETC or SAF/LLI will issue the final or complete reply, promptly provide appropriate local input (or a proposed reply) to HQ AETC or SAF/LLI, as required.

4.3.3.2.2. Work congressional and other high-level inquiries expeditiously, and limit interim responses (at the 20-day point) to situations requiring a commander-directed, IG, or MEO investigation. SAF/LLI, AETC/CV, HQ AETC/IG, and HQ AETC staff OPRs have a continuing interest in direct replies from wing-level to congressional inquiries. Send an informational copy of every direct congressional inquiry, LOA, and reply to SAF/LLI, AETC/CV, HQ AETC/IG, and the appropriate HQ AETC staff OPR. **NOTE:** Send a copy to AU/CV, 2 AF/CV, or 19 AF/CV, as necessary.

4.3.3.2.3. Have the IG staff prepare an ACTS II entry or an AF Form 102 when an IG investigation is initiated based on a congressional or other high-level inquiry. **NOTE:** An ACTS II entry or an AF Form 102 is not required when a congressional or other high-level inquiry is referred to functional agencies for action.

4.3.3.2.4. Inform AETC/CCX of other congressional contacts, outside the form of an inquiry, that merit the interest of the AETC/CC or CV.

4.6.3. Units must notify AETC/CCX of any material changes to itineraries or any new or changed requests.

4.8.1. Units must provide AETC/CCX a synopsis of the outcome of visits and any issues discussed that would be of interest to the AETC/CC or CV, regardless of whether SAF/LL or SAF/FML escorted the visit.

5. (Added) Responsibilities of the 12th Communications Squadron (12 CS), Base Comm Center.

The 12 CS Base Comm Center will:

5.1. Route and distribute congressional and high-level inquiry messages to the indicated HQ AETC staff OPR.

5.2. Furnish AETC/CV and HQ AETC/IG an informational copy of every congressional or high-level inquiry message directed to HQ AETC.

Table 1. (Added) Steps to Take in Handling Congressional Inquiries.

S T E P S	A	B	C	D
	Action	Type Congressional Inquiry		
		Direct requests by a member of Congress for		Requests from SAF or HQ USAF sources for information
		sensitive, FOUO, or classified information	routine unclassified information	
1	Review the information requested for the correct classification; pertinence to sensitive or controversial decisions; status of facilities; community impact; and any need to protect it from public dissemination, etc.	X	X	X
2	Field units contact the appropriate HQ AETC staff OPR or SAF/LLI action officer for specific guidance, as necessary.	X	X	X
3	Acknowledge receipt of every inquiry within 24 hours, informing the originator whether the reply will come from the local level, HQ AETC, or a higher level (SAF/LLI, SGI, or FML, as appropriate). Send an informational copy of the acknowledgment and inquiry to SAF/LLI, SGI, or FML (as appropriate); AETC/CV, HQ AETC/IG, plus HQ AETC staff OPR (and AU/CV, 2 AF/CV, or 19 AF/CV, as necessary). (Notes 1, 2, and 3)	X	X	
4	Send responsive, but nonreleasable, "For Official Use Only" (FOUO) or classified documents (correctly marked) to HQ AETC/DS for processing to SAF/LLI, SGI, or FML (as appropriate) for their action on the inquiry. Provide HQ AETC/IG with a copy of the transmittal memorandum, without the attachments. (Notes 1, 2, and 3)	X		

5	Promptly (within 20 days) provide releasable FOUO, unclassified, and nonsensitive information directly to the member of Congress (or congressional staff member) giving Privacy Act information with the written consent of the Air Force member. The first paragraph of every reply should refer to the date the inquiry was received (for purposes of HQ AETC/IGQ metrics). Send an informational copy of the response to SAF/LLI, SGI, or FML (as appropriate); AETC/CV, HQ AETC/IG, and the HQ AETC staff OPR (and AU/CV, 2 AF/CV, or 19 AF/CV, as necessary). (Notes 1 through 5)		X	
6	Handle telephone inquiries by preparing a memorandum of the phone call and following steps 1 through 5 above.	X	X	
7	Promptly provide fully coordinated information requested by Air Force agencies (e.g., AF/DPP, AFSPA, AFPC, AFPOA, etc.) as basis for a reply to a congressional inquiry. Send an informational copy of the request and response to AETC/CV, HQ AETC/IG, and the HQ AETC staff OPR (and AU/CV, 2 AF/CV, or 19 AF/CV, as necessary). (Notes 3, 4, and 5)			X

NOTES:

1. Cite the date the inquiry was received (in the first paragraph of every response) to support metrics maintained by higher headquarters regarding response timeliness.
2. This copy enables SAF/LLI, SGI, or FML (as appropriate) to anticipate any further information the congressional office might require from higher headquarters.
3. HQ AETC/IGQ provides MAJCOM (AETC) coordination for the Air Force Relations with Congress Program, compiles timeliness data, and ensures separate replies are not provided for the same complaint sent to multiple levels of the government or worked in functional and IG channels.

4. Releasable FOUO information is that which a member or constituent can obtain directly (himself or herself) under AFI 37-131, *Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program*.
5. The consent of the Air Force member is not required for release of Privacy Act information when a congressional office is acting for the member who is the subject of the pertinent record. However, consent of the member is required when a congressional office is inquiring on behalf of a third party (parent, spouse, friend, etc.).

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